

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

1       1. (Currently amended) A method for use in a recommender for  
2 evaluating the closeness of two items, each of said items  
3 characterized by at least one symbolic feature, said method  
4 comprising the steps of:

5           computing a distance between corresponding symbolic feature  
6 values of said two items based on an overall similarity of  
7 classification of all instances for each possible value of said  
8 symbolic feature values; and

9           aggregating the distances between each of said symbolic  
10 features values to determine the closeness of said two items.

1       2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said computing  
2 step employs a Value Difference Metric (VDM) technique to compute  
3 said distance between symbolic features.

1       3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said computing  
2 step employs a modified Value Difference Metric (MVDM) technique to  
3 compute said distance between symbolic features.

1   1.       4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said  
2 distance,  $\delta$ , between two values, V1 and V2, for a specific symbolic  
3 feature is given by:

4              
$$\delta(V1, V2) = \sum | C1i/C1 - C2i/C2 |^r$$

5       wherein  $C1i$  is the number of times  $V1$  was classified into  
6 class  $i$  and  $C1$  is the total number of times  $V1$  occurred in the data  
7 set.

1       5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said items are  
2 programs, classes of interest are "watched" and not-watched" and  
3 wherein said distance,  $\delta$ , between two values, V1 and V2, for a  
4 specific symbolic feature is given by:

5              
$$\delta(V1, V2) = \left| \frac{C1\_watched}{C1\_total} - \frac{C2\_watched}{C2\_total} \right| +$$

6              
$$\left| \frac{C1\_not\_watched}{C1\_total} - \frac{C2\_not\_watched}{C2\_total} \right|$$

7       wherein C<sub>1i</sub> is the number of times V<sub>1</sub> was classified into  
8 class i and C<sub>1\_total</sub> is the total number of times V<sub>1</sub> occurred in  
9 the data set.

1       6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein one of said items  
2 is a cluster mean.

1       7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said items are  
2 programs.

1       8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said items are  
2 content.

1       9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said items are  
2 products.

1       10. (Original) A method for assigning an item to one or more  
2 groups of items, each of said items characterized by at least one  
3 symbolic feature, said method comprising the steps of:  
4           computing a distance between corresponding symbolic feature  
5 values of said item and at least one item in each of said groups,

6 said distance based on an overall similarity of classification of  
7 all instances for each possible value of said symbolic feature  
8 values;

9 aggregating the distances between each of said features values  
10 to determine the closeness of said item and at least one item in  
11 each of said groups; and

12 assigning said item to said group associated with a minimum  
13 distance value.

1 11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said computing  
2 step employs a Value Difference Metric (VDM) technique to compute  
3 said distance between symbolic features.

1 12. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said computing  
2 step employs a modified Value Difference Metric (MVDM) technique to  
3 compute said distance between symbolic features.

1 13. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said distance,  
2  $\delta$ , between two values, V1 and V2, for a specific symbolic feature  
3 is given by:

4 
$$\delta(V1, V2) = \sum | C1i/C1 - C2i/C2 |^r$$

5       wherein C<sub>1i</sub> is the number of times V<sub>1</sub> was classified into  
6       class i and C<sub>1</sub> is the total number of times V<sub>1</sub> occurred in the data  
7       set.

1       14. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said items are  
2       programs, classes of interest are "watched" and not-watched" and  
3       wherein said distance, δ, between two values, V<sub>1</sub> and V<sub>2</sub>, for a  
4       specific symbolic feature is given by:

$$\delta(V_1, V_2) = \left| \frac{C_{1\_watched}}{C_{1\_total}} - \frac{C_{2\_watched}}{C_{2\_total}} \right| + \\ \left| \frac{C_{1\_not\_watched}}{C_{1\_total}} - \frac{C_{2\_not\_watched}}{C_{2\_total}} \right|$$

5       wherein C<sub>1i</sub> is the number of times V<sub>1</sub> was classified into  
6       class i and C<sub>1\_total</sub> is the total number of times V<sub>1</sub> occurred in  
7       the data set.

1       15. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein one of said  
2       items is a cluster mean.

1       16. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said items are  
2       programs.

1       17. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said items are  
2 content.

1       18. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said items are  
2 products.

1       19. (Original) A system for use in a recommender for  
2 evaluating the closeness of two items, each of said items  
3 characterized by at least one symbolic feature, comprising:  
4           a memory for storing computer readable code; and  
5           a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor  
6 configured to:  
7           compute a distance between corresponding symbolic feature  
8 values of said two items based on an overall similarity of  
9 classification of all instances for each possible value of said  
10 symbolic feature values; and  
11          aggregate the distances between each of said symbolic features  
12 values to determine the closeness of said two items.

1       20. (Original) A system for use in a recommender for  
2 evaluating the closeness of two items, each of said items

3       characterized by at least one symbolic feature, comprising:

4           means for computing a distance between corresponding symbolic  
5       feature values of said two items based on an overall similarity of  
6       classification of all instances for each possible value of said  
7       symbolic feature values; and

8           means for aggregating the distances between each of said  
9       symbolic features values to determine the closeness of said two  
10      items.

1       21. (Original) An article of manufacture for use with a  
2       recommender for evaluating the closeness of two items, each of said  
3       items characterized by at least one symbolic feature, comprising:

4           a computer readable medium having computer readable code means  
5       embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means  
6       comprising:

7           a step to compute a distance between corresponding symbolic  
8       feature values of said two items based on an overall similarity of  
9       classification of all instances for each possible value of said  
10      symbolic feature values; and

11       a step to aggregate the distances between each of said  
12   symbolic features values to determine the closeness of said two  
13   items.

1       22. (Original) A system for assigning an item to one or more  
2   groups of items, each of said items characterized by at least one  
3   symbolic feature, comprising:

4       a memory for storing computer readable code; and  
5       a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor  
6   configured to:

7       compute a distance between corresponding symbolic feature  
8   values of said item and at least one item in each of said groups,  
9   said distance based on an overall similarity of classification of  
10   all instances for each possible value of said symbolic feature  
11   values;

12       aggregate the distances between each of said features values  
13   to determine the closeness of said item and at least one item in  
14   each of said groups; and

15       assign said item to said group associated with a minimum  
16   distance value.

1        23. (Original) An article of manufacture for assigning an item  
2        to one or more groups of items, each of said items characterized by  
3        at least one symbolic feature, comprising:

4              a computer readable medium having computer readable code  
5        means embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means  
6        comprising:

7              a step to compute a distance between corresponding symbolic  
8        feature values of said item and at least one item in each of said  
9        groups, said distance based on an overall similarity of  
10      classification of all instances for each possible value of said  
11      symbolic feature values;

12        a step to aggregate the distances between each of said  
13      features values to determine the closeness of said item and at  
14      least one item in each of said groups; and

15        a step to assign said item to said group associated with a  
16      minimum distance value.